

The Emporium
154 Water Street, east side between
Central and Union Streets
Hallowell
Kennebec County
Maine

HABS No. ME-156

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

THE EMPORIUM

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Location: 154 Water Street, east side of street, Hallowell,
Kennebec County, Maine

Present Owners: Frederick E. and Beverly S. Robbins

Present Occupants: Robbins Antiques and apartment

Present Use: Antique store and private residence

Statement of
Significance: This brick commercial structure was built in the
early nineteenth century. The installation of a
cast-iron facade c. 1870 altered it to its present
Victorian appearance.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Early nineteenth century.
2. Architect: Unknown.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an
incomplete chain of title. Reference is to the Kennebec
County Registry of Deeds, Kennebec County Courthouse,
Augusta, Maine.

1909 Deed. December 15, 1909, recorded December 16, 1909.
Book 501; Page 332.

Samuel Titcomb, administrator of the estate of
James H. Leigh
to
Gracie A. Leigh

1909 Deed. December 16, 1909, recorded December 16, 1909.
Book 492; Page 374.

Gracie A. Leigh
to
Alice E. Dinsmore, Grace L. Stowell, and James
Leigh Dinsmore

1924 Deed. April 9, 1924, recorded May 9, 1924.
Book 613; Page 562.

Gracie A. Leigh, Alice E. Dinsmore, James Leigh
Dinsmore, and Clarence W. Stowell
to
Hallowell Trust and Banking Company

- 1929 Deed. December 11, 1929, recorded March 17, 1930.
Book 668; Page 345.
Augusta Trust Company
to
Alton L. White
- 1945 Deed. August 14, 1945, recorded August 20, 1945.
Book 818; Page 603.
Alton L. White
to
Lucille M. Potter
- 1970 Deed. August 12, 1970, recorded August 14, 1970.
Book 1527; Page 558.
Lucille M. Potter
to
Robert E. Judah and Mary F. Wandersee
- 1970 Deed. August 12, 1970, recorded August 14, 1970.
Book 1527; Page 585.
Robert E. Judah and Mary F. Wandersee
to
Frederick E. Robbins and Beverly S. Robbins

HABS
ME
6-HAL
7-

4. Builder: Unknown. Possibly built for Samuel Smith.
5. Alterations and additions: In 1870 a flood of the Kennebec River directly to the east damaged the building. It was rebuilt with a two-story cast-iron facade replacing its original three-story brick facade.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Stereopticon view of the building before 1870, in the collection of the Hubbard Free Library, Hallowell, Maine. C. 1900 photograph of the renovated facade, in the collection of the Hubbard Free Library, Hallowell, Maine.
2. Bibliography:
 - a. Primary and unpublished sources: Deeds. Kennebec County Registry of Deeds, Kennebec County Courthouse, State Street, Augusta, Maine.
 - b. Secondary and published sources: Row House Inc., newsletter, Vol. 3, Number 2, Hallowell, Maine, March-April, 1972.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

HABS
ME
6-HAL
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A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Emporium is one of a continuous row of brick and wood commercial structures along Water Street, backing up to the Kennebec River. The two-story facade of the brick building has arched cast-iron windows and ornament in the Victorian style.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The Emporium is rectangular, about 20 feet wide and 40 feet deep.
2. Foundations: Cut granite.
3. Wall construction: Exterior brick walls, painted on the facade, unpainted on the rear.
4. Trim and finish: Cast iron, painted. Wood, painted. The first story of the Emporium facade has a center doorway with a window to either side. They are separated by cast-iron pilasters which form arches at the top and have a continuing spiral surface. At the second-floor level is a projecting wooden cornice supported by dentils. Above, the second story has two windows with similar cast-iron frames. They are topped by bracketed projecting cornices and set in recessed brick panels. In the brick above is a recessed cross pattern. A wide projecting wooden cornice is supported by brackets, with large wooden brackets at either end.

The rear elevation has a window and large door in the basement, two windows on the first story, and two windows on the second story.

5. Openings:

- a. Doors and doorways: A double wooden door is set in the arched opening on the facade, with the arch above glazed. Each half of the door is glazed above a molded, raised panel. The rear door is a double door of vertical wooden planking.
- b. Windows: The first-story facade windows are fixed, each with six lights separated by cast-iron mullions. The second-story windows are wooden, double hung, with two-light sashes. The small basement rear window is

fixed. The other rear windows are wooden, double hung, with six-light sashes.

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6. Chimneys: The Emporium has one brick chimney in the northeast corner.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The gable roof slopes gently toward the front and rear of the building. It is tarred.
- b. Cornice: On the facade the projecting molded wooden cornice is supported by wooden brackets above a wooden dentil band. At either end of the cornice is a large wooden bracket. There is no cornice at the rear of the building; the roofing boards overhang the wall.

- C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Except for a narrow office across the rear, the entire first floor is a display area for antiques. The second floor is divided into several rooms; it is used as an apartment.
2. Stairways: The single run wooden stair to the second floor is located against the southern wall.
3. Flooring: On the first floor, wood, painted.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls, plaster, painted, and exposed wide boards. Ceiling on first floor, wood, painted.
5. Doors: Modern storm door in enclosure behind exterior facade doors forms a vestibule.
6. Trim: Plaster and wood, painted. Wide molded plaster band as ceiling cornice. Molded wood baseboard.
7. Lighting: Electric.

- D. Site:

The Emporium is part of the river-front commercial area in Hallowell, a reclaimed area which is currently thriving. All along Water Street are rows of similar structures, primarily brick, but some wooden.

Prepared by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr.,
and
Mary-Eliza Wengren
September 1971

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during 1971 and 1972 in the course of a photo-data project in the cities of Bath, Hallowell, Monmouth, and Richmond in the State of Maine. The project was arranged in response to the initiative of Mrs. Linda B. Clark of Row House, Inc., in Hallowell, Dr. Charles E. Burden of the Bath Marine Museum, Mrs. Paul L. Roberts of the Richmond Historical and Cultural Society, and Mr. H. Earle Flanders of Monmouth. All of these preservationists actively solicited or contributed funds and effectively fostered increased interest in the architectural heritage of their respective communities. The project was under the general direction of James C. Massey, at that time Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey; was supervised in the field by Denys Peter Myers, then Principal Architectural Historian of HABS; was carried on by Student Architectural Historian Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr., Boston University; and was continued by Alan Mast, Maine Arts and Humanities Commission, and Mary-Eliza Wengren (Mrs. Richard E., Jr.), Maine Historic Preservation Commission, under the field supervision of Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. Photographers were Mark C. Bisgrove, Sylvester Cobbs, Stanley Schwartz, Leon P. Shepard, and Richard Dwight Sturgis.